

**Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515**

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**McNULTY, HINCHEY, ENVIRO GROUPS,  
CRITICIZE EPA'S PROPOSED ROLLBACKS  
ON CLEAN AIR ACT, HUDSON RIVER DREDGING**

*(Albany, New York)* – Congressmen Mike McNulty (D-Green Island) and Maurice Hinchey (D-Hurley) were joined at Albany's Corning Preserve today by representatives from the Atlantic Chapter of the Sierra Club and Environmental Advocates of New York to criticize recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposals to rollback portions of the Clean Air Act, and delay the cleanup and dredging of the Hudson River.

The EPA will hold hearings in Albany on Monday to discuss its proposed modifications to the New Source Review (NSR), an essential part of the successful Clean Air Act.

The Clean Air Act has effectively reduced air pollution by nearly 30 percent since 1970, and the NSR program has been a key component of that progress. NSR protects public health and the environment by ensuring that when large industrial facilities upgrade and increase their air emissions, they install modern pollution control technology. NSR has prevented millions of tons of smog-forming chemicals from being released into the air.

"In an administration that has made a regular habit of weakening environmental protections, the rollback of the New Source Review program is the most far-reaching assault on our environmental laws yet," said Hinchey.

NSR was a vital tool for lawsuits brought by states, the EPA and environmental groups from 1999 - 2001 against dozens of polluters that are emitting huge quantities of nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide, which are major sources of acid rain, urban smog and respiratory disease.

"Because of this decision," claimed McNulty, "increased pollution from coal-fired smokestacks will make our acid rain problems worse, wreaking further havoc on New York's lakes, streams and forests. Allowing the nation's dirtiest power plants to increase their output without new pollution controls will adversely impact the health of New Yorkers by increasing respiratory disease in our state."

Hinchey added, "With more and more children suffering from asthma and respiratory illnesses, now is not the time to weaken air standards for big polluters such as power plants, refineries and chemical plants."

Earlier this month, EPA announced that they are pushing back the start of the PCB cleanup by one year, from 2005 to 2006. Both congressmen highlighted the cleanup of the Hudson River as one of the Bush administration's few positive environmental initiatives, yet both expressed disappointment at EPA's inability to keep the cleanup on track.

Said Congressman Hinchey, "I don't see how EPA's stated reason for the delay - negotiations with GE, the company responsible for dumping over 1 million pounds of PCBs into the river - should slow the process down. Moreover, by only agreeing to reimburse EPA a pittance of what they owe for the work that has already been done, GE is starving the agency of the necessary resources to keep the cleanup on schedule, and sticking taxpayers with the bill."

McNulty added, "General Electric has a decades-long record of delaying the cleanup – this is just another example of their obstruction."

The two New York Democrats suggested that by drawing out these negotiations and refusing to pay for the cleanup, GE has been able to keep EPA behind schedule. By only agreeing to reimburse EPA a pittance of what they owe for the work that has already been done, they said, GE keeps EPA from having the necessary resources to keep the cleanup on track.